

DCBS Superheroes – November 2022 Vision

Superheroes make a difference through teamwork

Honors go to the Two Rivers Service Region and staff from Division of Family Support

Teamwork is the common trait of this month's Superhero winners! Three winners, Mel Bray, Dawn Broughton and Glenda Surratt, were nominated for their work with the Division of Family Support's DSNAP program. And the entire Two Rivers Service Region is honored for their work to place almost 30 youth in a weekend after a residential school closure.

DFS Staff recognized for DSNAP program contributions

Three Division of Family Support staff have been named DCBS Superheroes for their efforts to support families through the Disaster Special Needs Assistance Program – DSNAP – for households affected by last year's tornadoes in Western Kentucky and the summer flooding in Eastern Kentucky. They are:

- **Melissa Bray**, Procedures Development Specialist II, Nutrition Assistance Branch
- **Althea (Dawn) Broughton**, Public Assistance Program Specialist, Nutrition Assistance Branch
- **Glenda Surratt** Public Assistance Program Specialist, Policy Development Branch

DSNAP operations are complex and take intense teamwork, and everyone involved gives a great effort to be commended. But these three staff were selected for special recognition for their work by DFS leadership.

Dawn and Melissa were the primary folks working the DSNAP Teams chat, fielding questions/problems from field staff working applications. They worked tirelessly during all operational hours, even on the weekend.

Their nominator said they were a constant within assisting field staff who were taking DSNAP applications and wrote:

“Melissa Bray and Althea (Dawn) Broughton were both vital components during the most recent DSNAP in Eastern KY. The two made themselves available answering DSNAP policy questions, system functionalities and even inquiries regarding what our agency can do to assist those that were actively receiving regular SNAP benefits in those counties. Their response time was rapid with the most important goal in mind, serving those impacted by the flooding with little delay in getting those much needed benefits. This also included reaching out to management and identifying system defects when need be.”

The nominator also wrote how grateful DFS leadership is to have Dawn and Melissa on the NAB and DCBS team!

Glenda wrote the DSNAP waivers and request, and work on these required late nights, constant updates and weekend work.

Glenda has worked in CHFS for more than 30 years. She is responsible for managing the Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach, DSNAP, and for requesting federal waivers. In recent months beginning in December 2020, Kentucky was

devastated with tornadoes and heavy rainfall in western, southcentral and eastern Kentucky. These natural disasters devastated families, homes and public infrastructures. Glenda's nominator said she was crucial in implementing procedures to support impacted populations with supplemental food needs so those may focus on their families and recovery efforts.

Glenda wrote the DSNAP plan and several Federal waivers requesting approval for temporary alternative procedures to result in a more effective and efficient administration of the SNAP during these times of state declared emergencies.

Her nominator said that even with constant changes to the disaster areas, she stayed up to date and kept staff informed of the progress. "The work has been overwhelming at times and she's always kept a smile on her face and will say, 'we will get it done.' We are lucky to have her on our team. Her work, dedication, and uplifting demeanor is commendable."

All three of these staff put in a herculean effort to make sure everything worked well within the DSNAP program. They absolutely went above and beyond, and more than deserve this special recognition. Congratulations, Mel, Dawn and Glenda!

Two Rivers Service Region honored for serving youth after school closure

Since so many staff were involved in a recent child welfare situation in the Two Rivers Service Region, this is our very first time naming an entire region DCBS Superheroes!

TRSR SRA Michelle Baize said that staff received a referral on a boarding school in their region. Law Enforcement was involved and coordinated a raid on the school on Oct. 24. Staff had a few weeks to plan for the raid and assisted by ensuring there were five forensic interviewers on site. Each forensic interview was paired with a DCBS worker to observe the interviews.

Michelle said additional staff were on site gathering all of the demographic information on the children. Teams also began the conversation with our local Recruitment and Certification teams and private child caring (PCC) agencies so they had the potential for approximately 30 teenage boys to come into care, and updated this group weekly on the situation so they could be planning and assisting with placement.

Then during the raid, Michelle said, "Law enforcement gathered enough evidence to shut the facility down. All of the boys had to be removed from school. This ended up being 28 teenage boys. None of which were from Kentucky, and there were parents were all over the country. So at the point I gathered a team and myself and those staff began calling all of the biological parents and coordinating pick up of the children."

Ten of the boys were able to be picked that evening or the next day so those boys remained at the TRSR office with staff caring for them until their parents arrived. Another team in the Ohio County office began calling the PCC agency and arranging for the placement of the boys who would need to enter out of home care. One PCC agency, Heritage, agreed to take all of the boys and place them.

As of early November, all boys have been returned to their biological homes except for two. So many staff worked incredibly hard and made many sacrifices to ensure all of these children were properly cared for.

Michelle said, "This was a huge undertaking and everyone, including the parents, have stepped up to the plate and made it happen for these children to get home. It took a lot of planning and coordination but couldn't have been any more successful. I am incredibly proud to be a part of TRSR!"